

Amendments To The Drawings:

The attached drawing sheets include changes to FIG. 9. These sheets contain corrections shown in red for the examiner's approval and are requested to replace the original sheets of FIG. 9.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet(s) of FIGS. 9

Annotated Sheet(s) Showing Changes of FIG. 9

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-21 are pending before this amendment. By the present amendment, claims 1, 3-5, 7-12, 14-15, 18, and 20 are amended. No new matter has been added.

At the outset, FIG. 9 has been corrected to remove inadvertent typographical errors with regard to the reference numerals. No new matter has been added, and the examiner's acceptance of the replacement sheet of FIG. 9 is respectfully requested.

In the office action (page 2), claims 14, 18, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

As to claims 14 and 20, the office action asserts that the claimed term "the same" lacks proper antecedent basis. In response, the applicants have amended claims 14 and 20 appropriately to remove the grounds of rejection. In claim 14, "the same" has been amended to -- the same network information--, and in claim 20 "the same" has been amended to -- the same local information--, so as to eliminate any indefiniteness within claim 14 and claim 20.

As to claim 18, the office action asserts that it is not clear "what the metes and bounds of the claimed limitation 'if the keyword that meets the search request ...' by raising a question that "it is not clear as to what happened if it doesn't meet the search request?" to support his rationale of indefiniteness.

In response to this assertion, the applicants cite MPEP § 2111.01(IV). The word "meets" is defined by the applicants in the specification as follows: "If the local information for searching designated by the searcher is **agreement** with the local

information within the search item, the search item including such local information is identified as a relevant search item that **meets** a search request by a searcher" (specification page 11, lines 22-25). In this context the terms "agreement" and "meets" imply a **match** between local information for searching, and local information within the search item. Further, if a keyword does not "meet the search request", the search item of a neighboring geographical region may be displayed because while the system gives deference to local searching, it does not search only those search items that have the same local information as the searcher (specification page 14, lines 6-18).

Nevertheless, the applicants have replaced the word "meets" with --matches-- in claim 18.

Further, the applicants respectfully disagree with the examiner's assertion that the claim 18 is allegedly rendered indefinite when the examiner cannot understand as to what happens "if this doesn't meet the search request??" Although the examiner's question may be worth noting, he errs in the rejection of §112, ¶2 indefiniteness. That is, reciting into claim 18 on what happens when a certain criteria does not meet concerns with the scope of claim 18, not about indefiniteness under §112, ¶2. Therefore, this question raised by the examiner has **no** relation with any issues regarding the §112, ¶2, indefiniteness. The applicants respectfully submit that determination regarding what would be (or would not be) a proper claim scope without reference to the teachings that are known in the prior art is **outside** the proper authority of an examiner. As claim 18 as amended is considered to be very clear and sets forth all elements of the claimed invention in a positive manner, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, all appropriate corrections have been made, and withdrawal of the rejections to claims 14, 18, and 20 is respectfully requested.

In the office action (page 3), claims 1-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,735,572 (Landesmann). The "et al." suffix is omitted in a reference name.

The applicants respectfully **disagree**.

The presently claimed invention relates to a method and system for effectively providing search results to a searcher in response to a search request from the searcher through a communication network. The presently claimed invention utilizes the local information of the searcher to refine search results when providing Internet search results to the searcher. When a searcher enters a keyword into a search engine, the results will be tailored to the local information of the searcher (for example, "the location information" of a searcher would include the searcher's geographical location information such as city, region, zip code, etc.), and the search items that are most relevant--not only in terms of keyword agreement, but also in terms of location--will be displayed most prominently. Further, in the event that there are no search results that meet the local information of the searcher, the search results that nearly meet the local information of the searcher will be displayed. That is, the presently claimed invention gives deference to the search results that meet the local information by also including the search results that closely meet (or matches) the local information.

In a conventional system as disclosed in the Background section of the specification pages 2-3, a searcher is required to input the local information separately in addition to inputting a keyword for any query in a conventional system. This results in

an inconvenience to a searcher if the searcher intends to repeat searching with different keywords regarding the same region, because the searcher will be required to designate a region for searching each instance of search.

Further, if a searcher chose to input local information each and every time the searcher completed a search, the results would still not be as well refined as the results would be if the searcher had utilized the presently claimed invention. The Background pages 2-3 describes the problems of the conventional searching system in that, even though a searcher may input both a keyword and a local information for a search, the search results of the conventional system would likely include potentially irrelevant search results based on only the keyword or only the local information.

As to claims 1, 15, 18, and 20, these independent claims have been amended to clarify the difference between the local information of the searcher and the local information of the network information provider. The local information relating to the searcher is now referred to as --the first local information-- in claims 1, 15, 18, and 20, and the local information relating to the network information provider is now referred to as --the second local information-- 1, 15, 18, and 20.

Claim 1 has been amended as follows (and similarly, claims 15, 18, and 20 have also been amended in the like distinguishing manner):

-- A method for providing local information search results in response to a search request input through a communication network by a searcher utilizing a keyword, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a first local information comprising at least a geographical information of the searcher for searching related to the searcher;

maintaining the first local information for searching related to the searcher;

receiving a second local information comprising at least a geographical information of one or more of search items for searching related to the searcher;

maintaining the second local information for searching related to the searcher;

maintaining a database including a plurality of the search items related to a network information provider, ~~in which the wherein some of the~~ search items are related to a ~~the keyword of the searcher and local information related to the network information provider;~~

receiving a ~~the~~ search request from the searcher utilizing the keyword;

identifying at least more than one search item related to the keyword that meets the search request and selecting the search item[s] related to the second local information matched to the first local information for searching, among the identified search items; and

arranging at least a part of the search items according to a predetermined search item arranging method in arranging the selected search items--.

The support for the amendment to claim 1 is found at least in the specification page 13, lines 15-19; and FIG. 3a, steps S310-S320.

Landesmann does not teach every limitation of claim 1 as amended.

Landesmann is directed to implementation of a method of buyer-driven targeting of purchasing entities which allows retailers to gain access to information of the purchasing habits of potential customers, not a method of refining Internet search results for a searcher based on local information relating to said searcher (Landesmann col. 1, lines 17-19).

Landesmann teaches that the purchase histories of the buyer entities are recorded in a database (Landesmann col. 14, lines 2-21; FIG. 3A, element 310).

Landesmann also teaches that the third party advertisers may access the database either manually or through interactive interfacing (Landesmann col. 20, lines 45-59; FIG. 3A, element 318). In the manual process of Landesmann, the advertiser works with a systems operator who searches the database to determine the target audience. In the interactive process the advertiser logs on and interacts with the system to determine the target audience (Landesmann col. 20, lines 45-59). However, neither the manual nor

the interactive accessing methods taught by Landesmann maintain advertiser preferences; rather, the advertiser's search criteria are input during each searching of the database.

In contradistinction, the present invention as recited claim 1 maintains two local informations: --a first local information-- for searching related to the searcher comprising at least a geographical information of the searcher, and --a second local information-- for searching related to the searcher comprising at least a geographical information of the one or more of search items (specification page 7, lines 20-29; page 11, lines 1-4; FIG. 3a, elements S310, S320). Landesmann fails to teach or disclose, *inter alia*, the following limitation of claim 1 (as well as claims 15, 18, and 20):

--receiving a **first local information** comprising at least a geographical information of the searcher for searching related to the searcher;
 --maintaining the **first local information** for searching related to the searcher;
 --receiving a **second local information** comprising at least a geographical information of one or more of search items for searching related to the searcher;
 --maintaining the **second local information** for searching related to the searcher--.

In Landesmann **no** information regarding the third party advertiser is maintained (Landesmann col. 15, lines 14-21; FIG. 3A).

Further, according to Landesmann, it would be **useless** to maintain the search criteria of the advertiser, because it is unlikely that such information would benefit the advertiser in the future. The search criteria may vary with each of the distribution channels, which are used to convey promotional incentive offers to participating buyer entities. The queries regarding the search criteria may be very specific or very vague, depending on any specific advertisement (Landesmann col. 20, lines 29-44).

In contradistinction, maintaining both the first local information and the second local information are claimed features of the present invention not taught by Landesmann. It is the maintaining of the first **and** second local informations that allows not only more refined search results tailored to the local information of the searcher, but also eliminates the inconvenience that a searcher should search local information by passing through a plurality of steps and a searcher should input desired local information for searching together with a keyword, **each** time the searcher completes a search.

At least for the reasons above, the applicants respectfully submit that all independent claims 1, 15, 18, and 20 as amended are allowable over the cited Landesmann reference. An indication of allowable subject matter is respectfully requested.

As to the dependent claims 2-14, 16-17, 19, and 21, the applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable at least since they depend from one of claim 1, 15, 18, and 20 that are now considered to be in condition for allowance for the reasons above.

For the reasons set forth above, the applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-21 pending in this application are in condition for allowance over the cited reference(s). Accordingly, the applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and earnestly solicit an indication of allowable subject matter.

This amendment is considered to be responsive to all points raised in the office action. Should the examiner have any remaining questions or concerns, the examiner

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is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to expeditiously resolve such concerns.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX OF ATTACHMENTS

Application Serial No. 10/551,815

**Replacement Sheet of FIG. 9
(a total of 1 drawing sheet)**

and

**Annotated Sheets Showing Changes of FIG. 9
(a total of 1 drawing sheet)**

10/10

FIG. 8

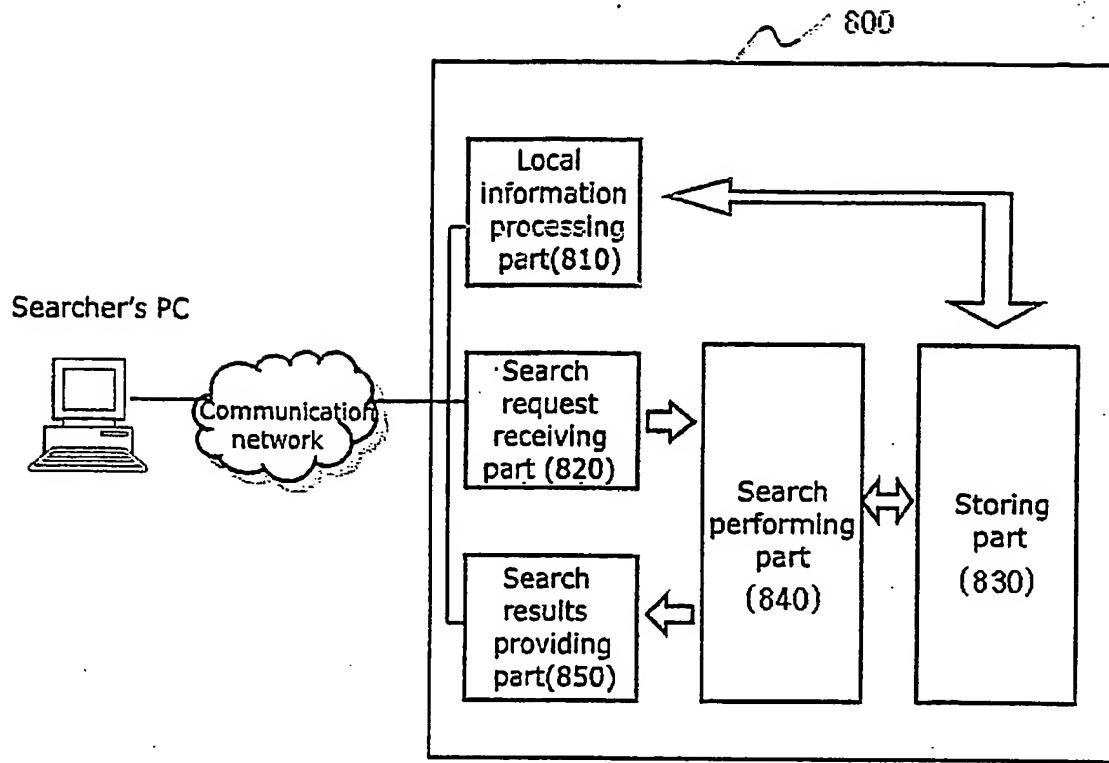


FIG. 9

